



DAWN OF DC



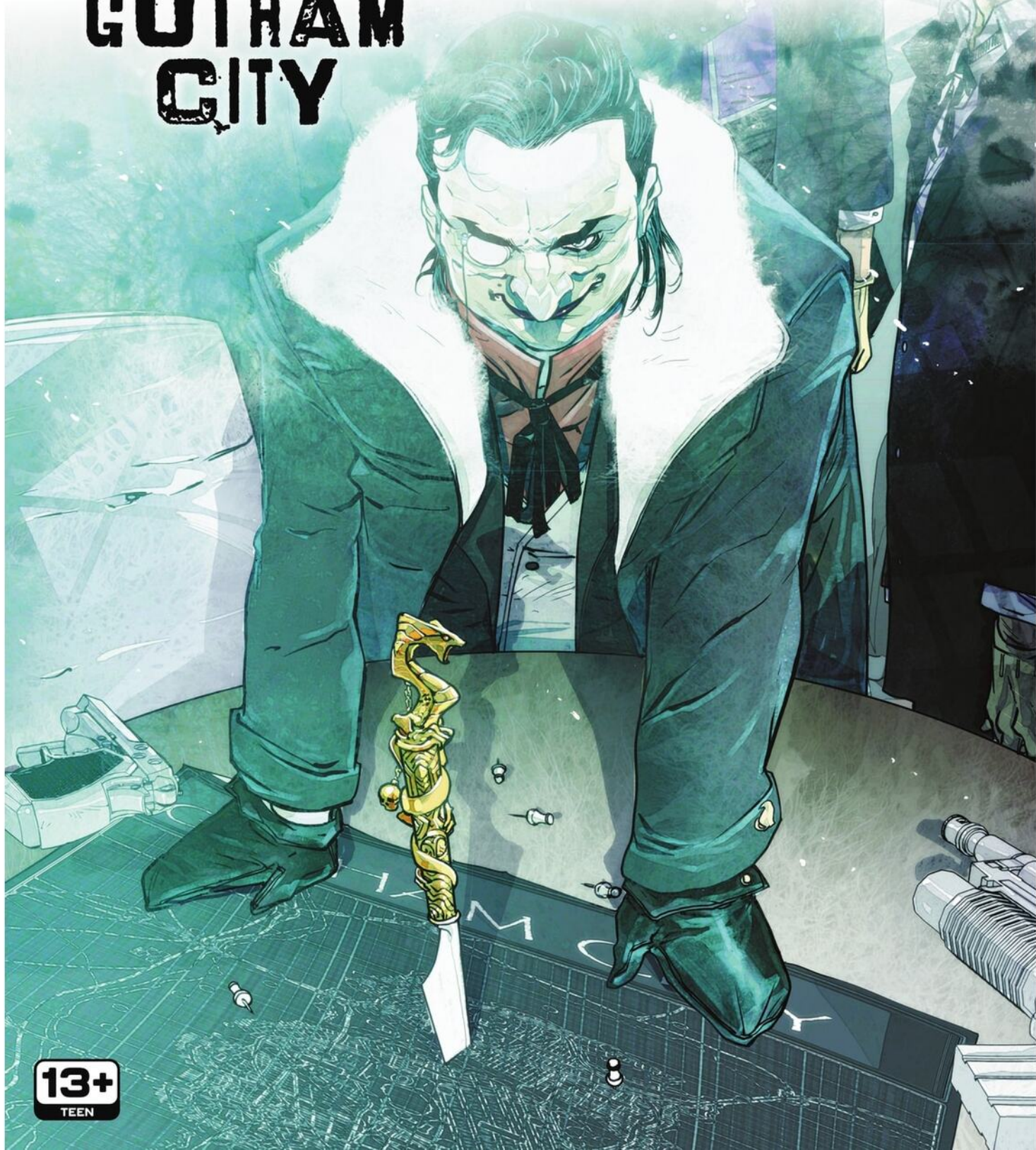
THE

PENGUIN

5

KING
DE LATORRE
MAIOLLO

**NEXT STOP:
GOTHAM
CITY**



13+
TEEN

HE'S GOT EVERYTHING HE EVER WANTED.
NOW HE WANTS MORE.

KNEEL BEFORE ZOD

© & TM DC.

WRITTEN BY
**JOE
CASEY**

ART BY
**DAN
McDARIO**

COVER BY
**JASON
SHAWN
ALEXANDER**



THE MOST BRUTAL
NEW SERIES
OF THE YEAR
STARTS IN
JANUARY



YOU GOT AN
ASHTRAY?



HELP, PROCURE
MR. NEEDHAM
AN ASHTRAY.

YES,
SIR.



I'M OFF ALL THE
@%#% NOW, IF
YOU'RE WONDERING.
WENT THROUGH
THE **WHOLE**
PROGRAM.

ALL **TWELVE**
STEPS. HIGHER
POWER...MAKING
AMENDS...
MEETINGS...
KIT **AND**
CABOODLE.

BEEN
YEARS. KEEP
THE **COINS** IN
MY DRESSER.
TOP DRAWER.



HIGHER
POWER?



IT'S **REQUIRED**,
Y'KNOW? DOESN'T
HAVE TO BE **GOD**
OR ANYTHING.

I MEAN,
@%#% **GOD**,
RIGHT? LOOK AT MY
DAD. YEAH, @%#%
HIM AND HIS
WHITE @%#%
BEARD.

NO, IT'S
JUST %%%%, Y'KNOW? ADMIT
YOU DON'T HAVE **CONTROL**
OVER, WHATEVER, **EVERYTHING**.
AND SOMEONE **ELSE** DOES.



WHO?



WELL, IT'S NOT LIKE
SOMEONE YOU **CHOOSE**
OR ANYTHING. NO, YOU
ACKNOWLEDGE.

YOU **OPEN**
YOUR EYES, SEE
THE **BIG** PICTURE,
REALIZE WHO'S BEEN
DRAWING THE
@%#% THING.



AND YOU
SAY...

...I
SURRENDER
TO A **HIGHER**
POWER.



AND HIS @%#%
NAME IS **OSWALD**
COBBLEPOT.

This is all over these days. Third one I've done this week like it.

These guys got nothing to do with Riddler. Riddler isn't in the drug trade.

I mean, it's just a supply-and-demand business.



What's there to solve?

BANG
BANG

But these fools get all dressed up like they're on assignment, searching for a puzzle. Playing @\$\$@ make-believe.

It's supposed to be like they're part of the big man's plan, instead of just another disposable @%\$#@ addict.



WHAT THE @%\$%\$ IS IT?!



WHAT IS MORE USEFUL WHEN IT'S BROKEN?

They think that'll protect them somehow, if people assume they're representing a madman.



#\$@%, IT'S--

They think they'll be safe.



GUHH!

As if anyone's
safe in
Gotham City.

IT'S AN *EGG*,
YOU IGNORANT
%#\$@%.

DC COMICS PRESENTS
"A HIGHER POWER"

TOM KING WRITER
RAFAEL DE LATORRE ARTIST
MARCELO MAIOLO COLORIST
CLAYTON COWLES LETTERER

CARMINE DI GIANDOMENICO COVER • CHRISTIAN WARD VARIANT COVER • ARIST DEVN 1:25 VARIANT COVER • BEN ABERNATHY EDITOR

The other guard goes
for his gun. Protecting
Falcone's stash.



Dude could've just
skipped. Maybe with
everyone panicking I'd
miss him. I mean, I
wouldn't, but he
doesn't know that.

I bet he's
@#@ high.



The grunts do it smarter,
get their legs kicking,
trying to rush the exit.



But they're
clumsy and
slow.

They're
probably
high too.



@\$%\$#\$
addicts.



Like fish in
a barrel of
whiskey.

I got very precise orders on this one. I'm supposed to leave a message.

The sibs were super into it. @\$\$%# giddy about it.

NN
NN...

One of those leave-a-goon-alive-so-he-can-tell-the-others sorts of @\$\$%#.

YOU
KNOW
ME?

GN!

"This isn't your territory. @\$\$%# off or catch a bullet. Your call."

Supposed to scare them out of trying this @\$\$%# in the sibs' town.

Y-YES...

So I miss an organ on one guy, put a boot on his neck, go through the whole act.

I'm @\$\$%#%@ Marlon Brando.

SAY MY
NAME.

But then I get this thought in my head. I see this @\$\$%# buying @\$\$%#%, selling @\$\$%#, making @\$\$%#%.

Just so he can shoot more @\$\$%#%.

BLACK
SPIDER.

@\$\$%# it.
I'll just leave a note.

BLAM



YOU GOT
THE HELP NOW,
HUH?

THAT'S SOME
@\$\$%\$%.



WE'RE OLD
FRIENDS.

HE WAS
KIND ENOUGH
TO ACCOMPANY ME
ON THIS LATEST
ADVENTURE.



I BET.

GOOD
FOR YOU.



WOULD YOU
CARE FOR SOMETHING
TO EAT?

THE VEAL
PARMIGIANA HERE
IS EXCELLENT.



YEAH, ALL
RIGHT.



HELP.

YES, SIR.
RIGHT AWAY,
SIR.



HEARD A
MONTH BACK YOU
WERE OUT HERE.
GATHERING.

SO WHAT
IS IT? YOU
BACK IN?

I MEAN,
PEOPLE WHISPER
REAL LOW, BUT
I GOT GOOD
@\$\$%\$% EARS.



I THINK
YOU'LL VERY
MUCH ENJOY
THE VEAL.

CUT
THIN. IT'S QUITE
DELICATE.



DAMN,
BIRD.

YOU'RE
HAVING A
PRETTY @#%\$%
GOOD TIME,
AREN'T YOU?

They don't like the note.

YOU WERE TO HAVE **ONE MAN** LEFT AND LEAVE THE **WARNING**.

MY **SISTER** TOLD YOU **SPECIFIC**.

CRUNCH

Before I got into the Lounge, I got patted down. @%#@% did a good job of it. Kudos to them.

AIDEN, PLEASE PUT THE **SPIDER** DOWN.

WHAT'S DONE IS **DONE**. PAST IS **PAST**. DUST IS **DUST**.

I'M CERTAIN WE CAN HAVE A FINE AND **CIVILIZED** CONVERSATION ABOUT HOW **BEST** TO PROCEED FROM HERE.

Only missed that one knife I keep taped to my shoulder.

OKAY, ADDISON.

MY **SISTER** SAID I GOT TO PUT YOU DOWN, SO I'M PUTTING YOU **DOWN**.

GNN!

But one would be plenty for this tall @%#@%.

LOOK, I WENT. **JOB'S DONE**.

WHERE'S THE @%#@% I'M OWED?

Then I'd do his @%#@% sister with my bare hands.

JOB IS **HALF** DONE.

YOU WILL THEREFORE RECEIVE **HALF** OF THE... @%#@%.

Instead, I start begging.

IF I WOULD'VE, I WOULD'VE.

THE FALCONES HEARD FROM YOU EITHER WAY. @#%\$.

THIS CHEAP @#\$%, THAT'S NOT HOW YOUR FATHER WOULD'VE PLAYED IT.

If Dad could see me now.

I DO NOT *PLAY* LIKE THE PENGUIN PLAYED. WAK WAK WAK, AND ALL THAT IMBECILITY.

WHICH IS WHY I KNOW THE WORTH OF YOUR SO-CALLED WORK IS JUST ABOUT HALF.

THOUGH MAYBE A BIT LESS, THE MORE I SERIOUSLY CONSIDER IT.

He'd have his back hand on my face faster than--

NO, NO, @#\$%@ THAT. I NEED THE FULL DOSE.

I WORKED THIS @#\$%@ LIKE I'VE BEEN DOING.

YOU GOT YOUR BODIES. WHAT DO I--

Well, about that fast, come to think of it.

TALK NICER TO MY SISTER.

Damn, that knife itches.

SPIDER. THAT'S FORTY MILIGRAMS OF VENOM.

IF YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT ANOTHER FORTY, I'M HAPPY FOR ANY OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH YOU AGAIN.

YOU DO WHAT YOU DO SO VERY WELL. AND LORD KNOWS THERE IS A SURFEIT OF PEOPLE IN THIS CITY THAT NEED TO DIE.

If I can't use it on them, maybe I could at least do me.

...YEAH...

YEAH, FINE, OKAY, @#\$%#.

WHAT YOU GOT?

SLAMMM

I met Daniel years back.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO WATCH.

After what I did to Dad. When I was getting cleaned up, first putting on the mask.

Starting to get out and wipe the smiles off all these junkies' faces.

WHAT THE **@@@** ELSE AM I GOING TO DO?

I was in and out of lockup.

But he stood by me, and we got close, and he got sick.

YOU COULD KILL ME.

He told me to run away. Fast as I could. He didn't want me to see him deteriorating.

I'M SUPPOSED TO LAUGH AT THAT, RIGHT?

THAT'S YOUR **GAME?** HOW YOU WANT ME TO **PLAY** THAT?

I told him I'd run enough, I was tired. I wanted to be still for a while.

I LIKE YOUR LAUGH.

SO SUE ME.

This leftover Bane @%#@ makes it easier for him.

And the sibs got exclusive access to it.

HOW'S IT FEEL?

I used to buy it from them, but they kept jacking up the price.

Eventually they said they had other uses for my talents than getting some cash.

BETTER.

So I do what I got to.

Because he's a good guy, Daniel. He doesn't deserve any of it.

I GOT TO GO OUT **AGAIN** TOMORROW NIGHT.

I KNOW WE WERE SUPPOSED TO DO THAT THING WITH **HAROLD**. YOU CAN GO **WITHOUT** ME IF YOU WANT.

I'M SORRY.

I'm not saying he's not an @%#@-- everyone's an @%#@%.

But whatever, he's all right is all.

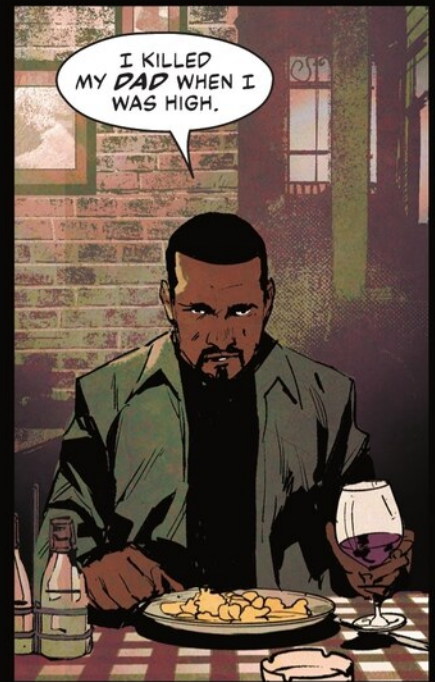
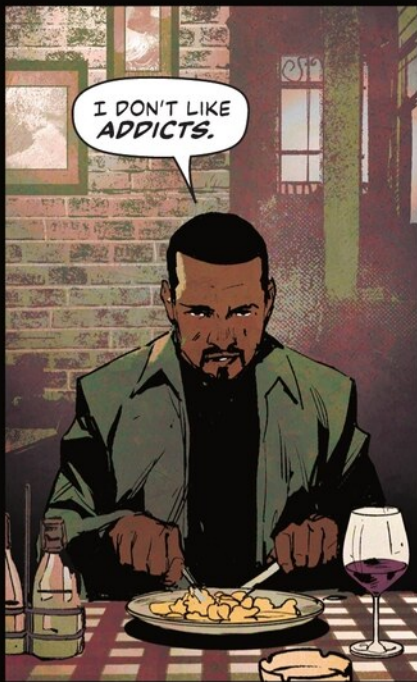
OKAY...

So now I shoot people for other people instead of just going after junkies.

Is what it is, I guess.

LOVE YOU.

MMM, ME TOO, HON...



Be good. Do what
the sibs told you.
Leave a message.
This isn't hard.

Just because
he's a dealer
doesn't mean--

DUDE,
BLACK SPIDER,
DUDE.

WHATEVER
YOU WANT.

#\$%#@.

BLAM

You had a plan. You were
going to have discipline.
Self-control, @\$%#%.

DON'T
@#%#\$
DO IT!

YOU **FALL,**
I'M GOING
TO--

@\$%@\$!

@\$%\$
YOU!

What'd I do?
God @\$@#\$%#!

The sibs are going be
so @#%\$ pissed.

And Daniel's already pissed
I missed the Harold thing
and I'm not going...

This
@\$\$%#@\$\$%
day, man.

It just
keeps
going.

Who knows what
the @\$\$%# else
is coming up.





Ah,
@#%
no.

We've danced this
@#% before,
the Bat and me.

I know the
steps well
enough.

I'm all right with my
hands. I put up a good
front. Get some distance.

Then I go
for my gun.

GNNN!

WAGGNN

BMFFFF

And he sees
me doing that.

And then
he gets
hard mad.



POP

Soon enough, I'm back in Arkham,
staring at white walls, ranting about
killing all the addicts in the world.

Wondering when the
@\$% laughing's
going to stop.



CRAK

No, I'm not doing it again.

Not with Daniel. @\$\$%@ that.

YOU'RE OUT OF CONTROL, ERIC.

LIE DOWN. LET ME *HELP* YOU.

Like Dad used to say.

If the dancing is for @%#@\$, get the @\$\$%\$@ out of the club.

ERIC! I CAN *HELP* YOU!

The Gotham River is the filthiest @@\$\$%# water in the world.

I grew up diving into it, me and my friends, coming home smelling like #\$\$%@.

Half of us died of @\$\$%\$@ cancer.

But it's thick and dark, and if you get deep enough into the muck and sewage, so that its slime is dripping on you...

There--nothing can see you there. All you can do is get lost.

I swim down as far as I damn well can, holding my breath until I'm passing out.

There are currents here. If I don't drown, I might come back up.

And wherever they bring me is random enough, even he can't predict it.

Next thing I know, I'm on the shore somewhere.

Everything hurts. But it's all hurt before, so @%##% it.

I puke up a gallon of water.

Or what's supposed to be water.





I took three days to bum around Gotham, make sure the Bat wasn't tailing me. No phones, no screens, no anything.

When I'm as certain as I ever can be, I go home.

DANIEL!
IT'S ME! I'M
SORRY!



By now Daniel's out of Venom, and the disease'll be creeping back.

Cramping, seizures, paralysis, all of it.

DANIEL?!
YOU HERE?!



I'm hurting pretty bad, covered in bruises.

But all that's nothing compared to the guilt of coming home empty, knowing he needs more.

NO
@\$\$%\$.



Then I find out I'm just beginning to get to my pain.

There are a few ways I could've approached it.

MY SISTER SAID TO DO IT RIGHT.

YOU SHOULD LISTEN TO MY SISTER.

GUH...

I could've found the sibs where they live and shot them each in the head.

Or I could go for their organization, slowly bleed them out.

Kill a few dozen a day for a few weeks, until I got to them.

WE KNOW WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR, SPIDER.

I WASN'T TRYING TO BE DISRESPECTFUL.

JUST LOOKING FOR HIM.

I might go to the Bat, give up everything I know.

How these two are operating while he's distracted by stupid @%@% wars.

WHAT WE GOT SHOULDN'T INVOLVE DANIEL.

HE'S NO PART OF THIS.

I guess I could've just walked away. I'm not saying I didn't consider that.

Who the @#\$\$ are these people to me?

YOU DO NOT DECIDE WHAT IS IMPORTANT AND WHAT IS NOT.

Instead, I go another way.

ALL YOU DO IS KILL THE PEOPLE WE WANT YOU TO KILL.

AND SAY THE WORDS WE WANT YOU TO SAY.

While she's going off on me, I think about my dad.

YOU DO NOT GET CAUGHT BY THE BATMAN! BRINGING THAT PLAGUE INTO OUR BUSINESS!

YOU DO NOT THEN DISAPPEAR!

YOU DO NOT TURN UP PATHETICALLY PLEADING FOR WHAT YOU HAVE NOT EARNED!

How gone on the needle I was, going into that store to rob it.

So gone I didn't even see him there. Buying his cigarettes.

DO YOU HEAR ME, SPIDER?!

He called out to me, called my name.

And all I heard was someone recognizing me, the trouble I'd be in, how they'd take away everything.

DO YOU THINK I'M MY FATHER?!

SOME COOING CLUCK TRAPPED BY ONE BATBOY AFTER ANOTHER?!

IS THAT THE PROBLEM HERE?!

So I shot him. Wasn't more thought than that.

Then I got my money and left.

When I realized what I had done, how blind that @ \$ # % made me...

...I found a mask and some guns and started to make it right.

I AM NOT MY FATHER!

I'M NOT A LOSER.

They give me my next assignment.
Another dozen men to gun down.
Another speech to recite to them.

If I don't do it up,
if I avoid Batman, my
great reward will be Daniel
living another few days.

I tell them I
want to see him
before I go off.

They laugh
at that.

They say I'm
an addict too.

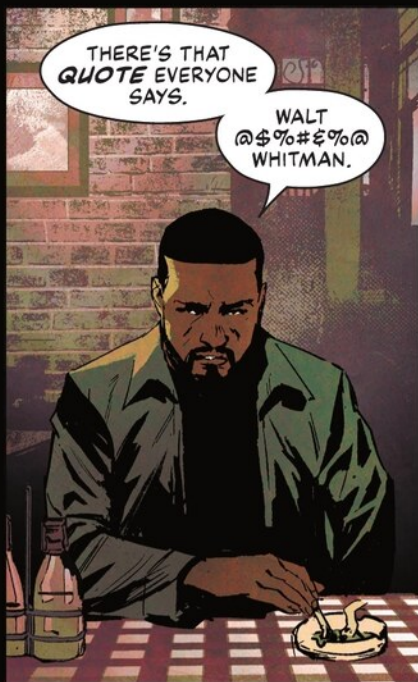
Or an
addict
still.

They ask me if I'm so
eager to kill addicts, why
don't I kill myself?

I don't
answer that
question.

They wouldn't
understand it.

I'M
SORRY.



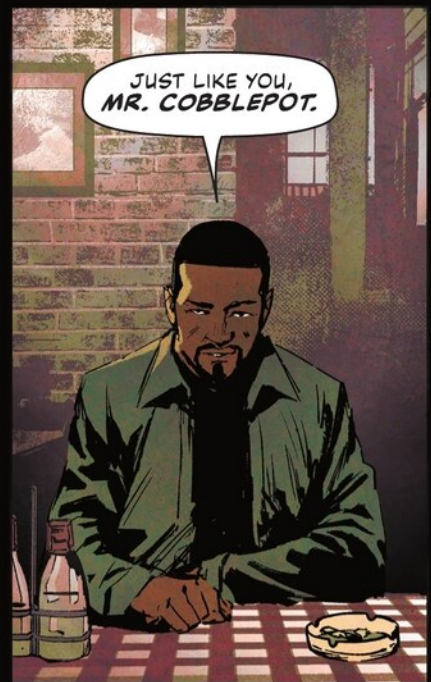
THERE'S THAT
QUOTE EVERYONE
SAYS.

WALT
@ \$ % # & % @
WHITMAN.



DO I **CONTRADICT**
MYSELF? ALL RIGHT,
MAYBE I DO.

I AM
@ % @ **LARGE**. I
CONTAIN MANY @ % @ \$ %
MULTITUDES.



JUST LIKE YOU,
MR. COBBLEPOT.



YOUR KIDS
DON'T **KNOW**,
DO THEY?

WHAT
YOU REALLY
ARE.



NO, I
SUPPOSE THEY
DO NOT.



WELL, I'VE
BEEN IN **GOTHAM**
MY WHOLE LIFE. UNDER
YOU EVERY SECOND OF
IT. THE **TRUE** MAYOR
OF THE CITY.

THEY
DON'T KNOW
YOU.

BUT I
@ \$ # @ % & %
DO.



I DON'T WANT TO **KILL**
THEM. I DON'T WANT
TO TAKE THEM DOWN
SLOWLY. I DON'T
WANT THE **BAT** TO
HAVE THEM.

AND I SURE
AS @ % # &
DON'T WANT TO
WALK AWAY.

YOUR **KIDS**, THEY
GOT TO **SUFFER**
IN A WAY NO MAN OR
WOMAN EVER HAS
BEFORE.

TO **FEEL**
WHAT DANIEL'S
@ \$ @ # \$ FEELING.



I WANT
THEM ON THEIR
KNEES BEFORE
A **HIGHER**
POWER.



YOU WANT
BACK? I'M ON
THE **INSIDE**.

HOW
CAN I HELP,
SIR?



WELL,
WELL, LOOK AT
THAT, HELP. HOW
THRILLING.

I HAVE
MY **MUSCLE**,
MY **GOONS**, MY
CONSIGLIERE.

AND NOW
I HAVE MY
SPY.

DO YOU **KNOW**
SOMETHING?

I DO
BELIEVE WE
ARE READY FOR
GOTHAM
CITY.

"THOUGH I VERY MUCH
DOUBT **THEY** ARE
PREPARED FOR **US**."



To be continued.

"An intelligent thriller with a complex story."—AIPT

IT'S THE AMAZONS VS. THE WORLD!

WONDER WOMAN

The game-changing
new era
from writer
TOM KING
and artist
DANIEL SAMPERE
is just getting
started!

TRAITOR

TRAITOR

AMAZONS
GO HOME

GET
OUT!

CRIMINAL

© & TM DC



DAWN OF
DC

DC NATION INTERVIEW

PATRICK WILSON ORM IN

AQUAMAN AND THE LOST KINGDOM



Where is Orm at the start of *Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom*?

After the first film, we see Orm taken away and we assume he's going to prison. The question was where, and what kind of an underwater prison was he going to? The very cool surprise is that it's the complete opposite of an underwater prison. It's somewhere where he is deprived of water, his lifeblood. He's in a desert prison—so he is in a very, very dry, arid, lonely, sad prison.

What pushes Arthur to seek help from Orm in prison?

Arthur gets to a point where he has to seek Orm's help. Now, if you need Orm's help, you must be pretty desperate. When they figure out that Black Manta is behind some stuff, that's where Orm comes into play. Arthur knows that because Orm's the one who found Black Manta in the first place, he hopefully would know where he is now.

How do you describe the relationship between Orm and Arthur?

At the end of the last film, Orm is still Orm. He's still angry, he still carries a lot of resentment, but I think deep in there he has some respect for Arthur because he's earned the title of King. That doesn't mean that he still doesn't believe he's the rightful heir to the throne, but I think there's an understanding...we'll just say that.

Why do you think this movie is a great theatrical experience?

What I love about this movie is the humor and all those little moments that James puts in there. Like, you guys think it's funny when Topo the octopus plays the drums? Well, guess what, he's gonna be even bigger in this movie. I think it gives the movie a lightness that you can balance out with the big epic battle scenes. You need all those little funny jokes—however, the spectacle alone should get you there. Go see this in the theater!

AQUAMAN AND THE LOST KINGDOM

IN THEATERS DECEMBER 22!

DC COMICS MARIE JAVINS VP - Editor-in-Chief JIM LEE President, Publisher & Chief Creative Officer ANNE DePIES Senior VP & General Manager LARRY BERRY VP - Brand Design & Creative Services DON FALLETTI VP - Manufacturing & Production LAWRENCE GANEM VP - Editorial Programming & Talent Strategy ALISON GILL Senior VP - Manufacturing & Operations NICK J. NAPOLITANO VP - Publishing & Business Operations NANCY SPEARS VP - Sales & Marketing

POWER GIRL 4, February, 2024. Published monthly by DC Comics, 4000 Warner Blvd., Bldg. 700, 2nd Floor, Burbank, CA 91522. GST # is R125921072. Copyright © 2023 DC Comics. All Rights Reserved. All characters featured in this issue, the distinctive likenesses thereof, and related elements are trademarks of DC Comics. The stories, characters, and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. DC Comics does not read or accept unsolicited submissions of ideas, stories, or artwork. For Advertising and Custom Publishing contact dccomicsadvertising@dc.com. For details on DC Comics Ratings, visit dc.com/ratings.

The Last Kryptonian-DCP

